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3/3/07

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line ¹²23 of page 12 and extending to line 9 of page 13 with the following paragraph:

--Opening 405 in this embodiment has a key element 408 formed inward from the diameter of the opening, as shown, that aligns with and engages key slot 203 of screw stem 200 in assembly, such that gripper cup 400 is prevented in assembly from rotating about screw stem 200. Gripper cup 400 has an annular raised region 404 provided peripherally around and on the inside surface of the sidewall at a location substantially opposing groove 402. Raised portion 404 is a retention element adapted to cause expansion of gripping teeth 406, further enabled by expansion slots 403, to provide a spring mechanism for enabling the previously described turning nut hub (Fig. 6A described below) to be pressed into place inside the gripper cup. Gripper cup 400 and the previously mentioned retainer cap (Fig. 5A described below) form the described retention housing assembly 409 for the purpose of retaining socket 205 in place over stem 200 and for providing a stable travel environment for screw stem 200, the travel controlled by the turning nut or knob.--

In the specification:

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Please replace the paragraph beginning on line ¹⁸~~18~~ of page 9 with the following paragraph:

--Threaded section 202 of screw stem body section 204 has a key slot 203 formed in a longitudinal direction, the slot of substantial depth to equal or slightly exceed the depth of threads 202 and of a length to span the length of threaded section 202. The purpose of slot 203 is to retain a key that also engages a retention housing assembly 409 enabling turning of screw stem 200 to cause travel of the stem through the retention housing assembly, which is described in detail below.--

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Please replace the paragraph beginning on line ⁵~~14~~ of page 10 with the following paragraph:

--Socket 205 is made from a pliable, elastic rubber-like material. Further, socket 205 has a flange 301 formed on the end opposite the closed end. Flange 301 serves as a retention flange to be engaged by a retainer cap, which is part of a retention housing assembly 409 described further below. Socket 205 has a raised portion 302 in the form of a ring extending from the backside surface of flange 301. Ring 302 is substantially concentric with flange 301. Ring 302 fits into an annular groove of a gripper cup that along with the previously mentioned retainer cap forms a retention housing assembly 409 for retaining socket 205 in place and for enabling longitudinal travel of the underlying screw stem 200. Referring now to Fig. 3B, flange 301, annular raised portion 302 and the outer and inner walls of socket 205 are substantially concentric. The outermost diameter of socket 205 is smaller than the inner diameter of an annular opening meant to be sealed.--

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In the specification:

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Please replace the paragraph beginning on line ²⁴23 of page 16 with the following paragraph:

— Fig. 8A is a partial elevation view of a stem 802 and sleeve 804, forming pair 800, used in an open-head stopper assembly and inserted into an annular opening 701 according to another embodiment of the present invention. In Fig. 8A shows the assembly in a relaxed position such that opening 701 is not sealed.—